

REMARKS

In the January 14, 2003 Office Action, the specification and claims 19 and 20 were objected to for informalities. Moreover, claims 1-11 and 14-20 were rejected in view of prior art, while claims 12-13 were indicated as containing allowable subject matter. Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for this indication of allowable subject matter and the thorough examination of this application. Claims 16 and 19 were also rejected for failing to indicate and claim particularly and distinctly the subject matter that Applicant regards as the invention. No other objections or rejections were made in the Office Action.

Status of Claims and Amendments

In response to the January 14, 2003 Office Action, Applicant has amended independent claims 1 and 16. Applicant has also amended claims 3 and 20 for reasons *unrelated* to patentability. The amendments to claims 3 and 20 merely change the dependency of these claims. Applicant has also amended claim 16 to obviate the rejection due to indefiniteness, and canceled claim 19, without prejudice or disclaimer. Moreover, Applicant has amended claim 12 to place it in independent form. In addition, Applicant has canceled claims 2 and 14, without prejudice or disclaimer, and added new claims 21-22. Thus, claims 1, 3-13, 15-18 and 20-22 are pending, with claims 1, 12 and 16 being the only independent claims. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and the following comments.

Drawings

No objections were made to any of the drawings in the Office Action. However, Applicant has filed herewith a Request for Approval of Replacement Drawing Sheet and one (1) replacement sheet of drawings including a modified Figure 2. Modified Figure 2 shows the first transverse width (w_1) that is greater than the second maximum transverse width (w_2)

and less than the third transverse width (w_3), as set forth in the newly added claims 21 and 22. Applicant believes that the drawings comply with 37 CFR §1.83(a). Applicant respectfully requests approval of the changes to Figure 2. Also, Applicant respectfully requests entry of the replacement sheet including the modified Figure 2.

Specification

On page 2 of the Office Action, the specification was objected to for informalities, i.e., the specification states that “the dual-bearing reel RL is installed onto the reel seat RS as shown in Figure 2.” The Office Action indicates that these items are not found in Figure 2. In response, Applicant has amended the specification to clarify that the dual-bearing reel RL installed onto the reel seat RS is shown in Figure 1. Applicant believes that the specification is now correct. Withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Claim Objections

On page 2 of the Office Action, claims 19 and 20 were objected to for informalities, i.e., improper dependency. In response, Applicant has amended claim 20 to depend from independent claim 16. Applicant has also canceled claim 19, without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicant believes that the claims are now correct. Withdrawal of the claim objection is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §112

On page 2 of the Office Action, claims 16 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. In response, Applicant has amended claim 16 to clarify the claimed fishing rod. Applicant has also canceled claim 19, without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicant believes that the claims now comply with 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

On pages 3-5 of the Office Action, claims 1-11 and 14-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,865,388 (Yeh) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,150,854 (Noda). In response, Applicant has amended independent claims 1 and 16. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection, particularly in view of the above amendments and the following comments.

Independent claim 1, as now amended, requires *a harness connector* including first and second harness clips, in which the harness connector is provided on a side of a reel body on which a rod mount is mounted with the first and second harness clips being located on first and second sections of the reel body, respectively. Similarly, independent claim 16 requires *harness connecting means* including first and second harness clips, in which the harness connecting means is provided on a side of a reel body on which a rod mounting means is coupled with the first and second harness clips being located on first and second sections of the reel body, respectively.

Applicant respectfully submits that one of ordinary skill in the art would *not* combine the teachings of the U.S. Patent No. 5,865,388 (Yeh) and U.S. Patent No. 5,150,854 (Noda) together as suggested in the Office Action, because the Yeh and Noda patents disclose fishing reels that have completely different purposes. In particular, the Yeh patent appears to disclose fishing reels that are used for *lightweight fishing* (i.e., *not* big-game fishing). In other words, the Yeh patent appears to disclose fishing reels that are *not used with any harness whatsoever*.

In contrast, the Noda patent discloses a fishing reel that is used for *big-game fishing* including engaging members 40 and 41 that engage a harness, and a bridging member 30 that bears heavy loads applied to the fishing reel. In other words, the purpose of the Noda fishing reel is completely different from the purpose of the Yeh

fishing reels. Thus, there is *no motivation or suggestion* to modify any fishing reel of the Yeh patent to include the engaging members of the Noda patent, because there is *no need to attach any harness* via engagement members to the light weight fishing reels disclosed in the Yeh patent.

It is well settled in U.S. patent law that the mere fact that the prior art can be modified does *not* make the modification obvious, unless the prior art *suggests* the desirability of the modification. Accordingly, the prior art of record lacks any suggestion or expectation of success for combining the Yeh patent and the Noda patent to create Applicant's unique arrangement of the harness connector/harness connecting means, as set forth in independent claims 1 and 16 as now amended.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejections be withdrawn in view of the above comments and amendments.

Allowable Subject Matter

On page 5 of the Office Action, claims 12 and 13 were indicated as containing allowable subject matter. Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for this indication of allowable subject matter and the thorough examination of this application. In response, Applicant has amended claim 12 to place it in independent form. Thus, independent claim 12 and its dependent claim 13 are believed to be allowable.

New Claims 21-22

Applicant has added new dependent claims 21 and 22. Applicant believes that the dependent claims 21 and 22 are allowable over the prior art of record in that they depend from independent claims 1 and 16, respectively, and therefore are allowable for the reasons stated above for independent claims 1 and 16. Moreover, the dependent claims 21 and 22 are further allowable because they include additional limitations.

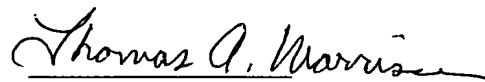
Prior Art Citation

In the Office Action, additional prior art references were made of record. Applicant believes that these references do not render the claimed invention obvious.

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In view of the foregoing amendment and comments, Applicant respectfully asserts that claims 1, 3-13, 15-18 and 20-22 are now in condition for allowance. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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